

**Q**UOTE is ther noon, thou queen of misericorde,  
That thou nart cause of grace and mercy here;  
God vouched sauf thurgh thee with us tacorde.  
For certes, Cristes blisful moder dere,  
Were now the bowe bent in swich manere,  
As it was first, of justice and of yre,  
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here;  
But thurgh thee han we grace, as we deayre.

**E**VER hath myn hope of refut been in thee,  
For heerbifrom ful ofte, in many a wyse,  
Hast thou to misericorde receyved me.  
But mercy, lady, at the grete assyse,  
Whan we shul come bifore the hye justyse!  
So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde,  
That, but thou er that day me wel chastyse,  
Of verrey right my werk me wol confounde.

**F**LEEING, I flee for socour to thy tente  
Me for to hyde from tempest ful of drede,  
Biseching you that ye you not absente,  
Though I be wikke. O help yit at this nede!  
Al have I been a beste in wille and dede,  
Yit, lady, thou me clothe with thy grace.  
Thyn enemy and myn, lady, tak hede,  
Unto my deth in poynt is me to chace.

**G**LORIOUS mayde and moder, which  
that never  
Were bitter, neither in erthe nor in see,  
But ful of swetnesse and of mercy ever,  
Help that my fader be not wroth with me!  
Spek thou, for I ne dar not him ysee.  
So have I doon in erthe, alas therwyle!  
That certes, but if thou my socour be,  
To stink eterne he wol my gost exyle.

**H**E vouched sauf, tel him, as was his wille,  
Bicome a man, to have our alliaunce,  
And with his precious blood he wroot  
the bille  
Upon the crois, as general acquitaunce,  
To every penitent in ful creauce;  
And therfor, lady bright, thou for us praye.  
Than shalt thou bothe stinte al his grevaunce,  
And make our foo to failen of his praye.

**N**OT it wel, thou wolt ben our socour,  
Thou art so ful of bountee, in certeyn.  
For whan a soule falleth in errour,  
Thy pitee goth and haleth him ayein.  
Than makest thou his pees with his sovereyn,  
And bringest him out of the crooked strete.  
Whoso thee loveth he shal not love in veyn,  
That shal he finde, as he the lyf shal lete.

**R**HLENDERES enlumined ben they  
That in this world ben lighted with  
thy name,  
And whoso goth to you the righte wey,  
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Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.  
Now, queen of comfort, sith thou art that same  
To whom I seche for my medycyne,  
Lat not my foo no more my wounde entame,  
Myn hele into thyn hand al I resigne.

**L**ADY, thy sorwe can I not portreye  
Under the cros, ne his grevous penaunce.  
But, for your bothes peynes, I you prey,  
Lat nat our alder foo make his bobaunce,  
That he hath in his listes of mischaunce  
Convict that ye bothe have bought so dere.  
As I seide erst, thou ground of our substaunce,  
Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere!

**M**OISES, that saugh the bush with flammes  
rede  
Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke  
brende,  
Was signe of thyn unwemmed maidenhede.  
Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende  
The Holy Gost, the which that Moises wende  
Had ben a fyr; and this was in figure.  
Now lady, from the fyr thou us defende  
Which that in helle eternally shal dure.

**N**OBLE princesse, that never haddest pere,  
Certes, if any comfort in us be,  
That cometh of thee, thou Cristes moder  
dere,  
We han non other melodye or glee  
Us to rejoyse in our adversitee,  
Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so prey  
for us, and that for litel hyre as ye,  
That helpen for an Ave/Marie or tweye.

**V**ERREY light of eyen that ben blinde,  
O verrey lust of labour and distresse,  
O tresore of bountee to mankinde,  
Thee whom God chees to moder for humbleste!  
From his ancille he made thee maistresse  
Of hevenc and erthe, our bille up for to bede.  
This world awaiteth ever on thy goodnesse,  
for thou ne failest never wight at nede.

**P**URPOS I have sum tyme for tenquere,  
Wherfore and why the Holy Gost thee  
soughte,  
Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thyn ere.  
He not to werre us swich a wonder wroughte,  
But for to save us that he sithen boughte.  
Than nedeth us no wepen us for to save,  
But only ther we did not, as us oughte,  
Do penitence, and mercy axe and have.

**Q**UEN of comfort, yit whan I me bithinke  
That I agilt have bothe, him and thee,  
And that my soule is worthy for to sinke,  
Alas, I, caitif, whider may I flee?  
Who shal unto thy sone my mene be?  
Who, but thyself, that art of pitee welle?  
Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee  
Than in this world mighte any tunge telle.

**R**EDRESSE me, moder, and me chastyse,  
For, certeynly, my fadres chastisinge  
That dar I nought abyden in no wyse:  
So bidous is his rightful rekeninge.  
Moder, of whom our mercy gan to springe,  
Berth ye my juge and eek my soules leche;  
for ever in you is pitee haboundinge  
To ech that wol of pitee you biseche.

**S**OTH is, that God ne graunteth no pitee  
Withoute thee; for God, of his goodnesse,  
Foryiveth noon, but it like unto thee.  
He hath thee makid vicaire and maistresse  
Of al the world, and eek governeresse  
Of hevenc, and he represseth his justyse  
After thy wille, and therefore in witnessse  
He hath thee crowned in so ryal wyse.

**T**EMPLE devout, ther God hath his woninge,  
fro which these misbileded pryved been,  
To you my soule penitent I bringe.  
Receyve me! I can no ferther flee!  
With thornes venimous, O hevenc queen,  
for which the erthe acursed was ful yore,  
I am so wounded, as ye may wel seen,  
That I am lost almost; it smert so sore.

**V**IRGINE, that art so noble of appaile,  
And ledest us into the hye tour  
Of Parady, thou me wisse and counsaile,  
how I may have thy grace and thy socour;  
Al have I been in fithe and in errour.  
Lady, unto that court thou me ajourne  
That cleped is thy bench, O fresshe flour!  
Theras that mercy ever shal sojourne.

**X**RISTIS, thy sone, that in this world  
alighte,  
Upon the cros to suffre his passioun,  
And suffred eek, that Longius him pighte,  
And made his herte blood to renne adoun;  
And al was this for my salvacioun;  
And I to him am fals and eek unkinde,  
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun,  
This thanke I you, socour of al mankinde.

**S**AAC was figure of his deeth, certeyn,  
That so ferforth his fader wolde obeye  
That him ne roughte nothing to be slayn;  
Right so thy sone list, as a lamb, to deye.  
Now lady, ful of mercy, I you prey,  
Sith he his mercy mesured so large,  
Be ye not skant; for alle we singe and seye  
That ye ben from vengeance ay our targe.

**J**ACHARIE you clepeth the open welle  
To wasshe sinful soule out of his gilt.  
Therfore this lessoun oughte I wel to telle  
That, nere thy tender herte, we weren spilt.  
Now lady brighte, sith thou canst and wilt  
Ben to the seed of Adam merciable,  
So bring us to that palais that is bilt  
To penitents that ben to mercy able. Amen.  
Explicit carmen.

## THE COMPLEYNTE UNTO PITEE.

**P**ITEE, that I have sought so  
yore ago,  
With herte sore, and ful of  
besy peyne,  
That in this world was  
never wight so wo  
Withoute dethe; and, if I  
shal not feyne,  
My purpos was, to Pite to  
compleyne  
Upon the crueltee and tyrannye  
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn yeres,  
Had ever in oon a tyme sought to speke,  
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres,  
To preyen hir on Crueltee me awreke.  
But, er I might with any worde outbreke,  
Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,  
I fond hir deed, and buried in an herte.

Adoun I fel, whan that I saugh the herse,  
Deed as a steel, whyl that the swogh me laste;  
But up I roos, with colour ful diverse,  
And pitously on hir myn yen caste,  
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,  
And for the soule I shoop me for to prey;  
I nas but lorn; ther nas no more to seye.

Thus am I slayn, sith that Pite is deed;  
Alas! that day! that ever hit shulde falle!  
What maner man dar now holde up his heed?  
To whom shal any sorwful herte calle?  
Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,  
In ydel hope, folk redeles of peyne,  
Sith she is deed, to whom shul we compleyne?

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,  
That no wight woot that she is deed, but I;  
So many men as in hir tyme hir knewe,  
And yet she dyed not so sodeynly;  
for I have sought hir ever ful besyly  
Sith first I hadde wit or mannes mynde;  
But she was deed, er that I coude hir fynde.

Aboute hir herse ther stoden lustily,  
Withouten any wo, as thoughte me,  
Bountee parfit, wel armed and richely,  
And fresshe Beautee, Lust, and Jolitee,  
Assured Maner, Youthe, and Honestee,  
Wisdom, Estaat, and Dreed, and Governauce,  
Confedred bothe by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt hadde I, writen, in myn hond,  
for to have put to Pite as a bille,  
But whan I al this compaignie ther fond,  
That rather wolden al my cause spille  
Than do me help, I held my pleynte stille;  
for to that folk, withouten any faile,  
Withoute Pite may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise virtues, sauf Pite,  
Keping the corps, as ye have herd me seyn,  
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